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Kuipers Introduces Charter School Oversight and Accountability Act

(LANSING) – State Senator Wayne Kuipers, R-Holland, today introduced the Charter School Oversight and Accountability Act, legislation ensuring that the expansion of Michigan’s charter schools are consistently overseen and provide steadfast accountability.

“As Michigan prepares to expand the number of charter schools, it is important to ensure that these schools are consistently overseen and demonstrate fiscal and academic accountability,” Kuipers, chair of the Senate Education Committee, said. “Through the introduction of the Charter School Oversight and Accountability Act, we are balancing the need for additional charter schools and the need for consistent accountability.”

Among the provisions included in the Act are:

- Michigan’s charter schools shall be subject to the general supervision and leadership of the State Board of Education and shall be solely incorporated as Michigan non-profit organizations, under the Michigan Non-Profit Corporation Act of 1982.
- Authorizers of Michigan’s charter schools shall file a copy of the charter contract with the Michigan Department of Education and make the contracts available for public inspection.
- Authorizers of Michigan’s charter schools shall provide sufficient oversight to ensure that each school it authorizes is in compliance with statute, rules, and the terms of its contract. If the state board of education finds that an authorizing body is not engaging in appropriate continuing oversight, they may suspend the power of the authorizing body to issue new contracts.
- Michigan’s charter schools shall submit to their authorizer and make available for public inspection their annual budget, budget amendments, quarterly financial statements, and annual independent financial audit, including management letter.
- Michigan’s charter schools shall comply with state and federal special education requirements and shall include a statement on all pupil recruitment materials that appropriate special education services will be made available to students as required by law.

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- Michigan's charter schools shall comply with classroom teacher certification requirements (PART 22 of the Revised School Code), employee criminal history check requirements (MCL 380.1230), and unprofessional conduct check requirements (MCL 380.1230B).
- Education management companies shall provide the school's governing board with detailed information regarding teachers, administrators and support staff assigned to work at the school.

According to the legislation Michigan will expand its number of charter schools by 300 and create 50 new charter high schools.

The legislation awaits consideration in the Senate Education Committee.